

**Updates from the District Office**

January 21, 2021

Dear BSCSD Parents and Caregivers:

Our continued thanks for your understanding and support during these past two weeks of fully remote instruction. We know that this has posed significant challenges for many of you, some of which hopefully may have been alleviated a bit with the child care that a number of our school aide staff have provided. However, we know and agree that having our hybrid learning model back in place as soon as possible is what most of our students need. Below, please find a number of updates on our status for next week, on COVID-19 related information, and on a few other goings on within the district.

1. **Reopening Status for Monday, January 25** – At this time, we have sufficient staffing in place to be able to open for in-person learning for all schools next week.
  - a. For High School, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders will be in-person.
  - b. For Middle School, Monday and Tuesday will be A-K students and Wednesday and Thursday will be L-Z students.
  - c. For Kindergarten - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Monday - Thursday return to Hybrid Model.

*That said- please be aware* that as we continue to track and trace positive cases and mandatory quarantines, it is possible that this decision may have to change. If so, to the extent that we can, we will bring in targeted groups of learners who are struggling in the remote setting. We will notify you as soon as possible should we need to make any such adjustments.

2. **Website Positive Case Report** – After speaking with a few of you about the number of positive cases that we have in the District and the fact that the state report card system does not always seem to be updated in a timely fashion and is sometimes inaccurate, we have created a *COVID-19 Cases in BSCSD* page on our website that will be updated at the end of each business day. We are finishing the revisions on this page now and will send the link out as soon as the page is ready to go live. My continued thanks to those who have been generous with suggestions for how we can improve our communications!
3. **February Break Travel** – As much as we would like to keep our in-person model of learning open, it is possible, based on what we experienced during and after the Christmas break, that we will have an increase in cases and quarantines after the upcoming February break. I am sure that many grow tired of my requests to stay put and follow the safety protocols that are in place, but I must ask once again for staff and families to be mindful of the impact that travel and group gatherings are having on our ability to stay open. While it remains true that schools are very safe when it comes to the spread of the virus, our schools exist in a community and community spread is a very real problem (as we have learned over the past three weeks.)

4. **Reporting of Cases** – Please continue to use our [COVIDreport@bscsd.org](mailto:COVIDreport@bscsd.org) mailbox to report positive cases and quarantining to us. While the county is working hard to make the needed adjustments for timely reporting to us, they are not always able to do so and thus we need your help. Please contact us as soon as you are aware of your situation.
5. **Winter and Fall 2 Sports** – While the State has allowed and the Board has approved the hosting of state-classified “low risk” sports this winter, the State has not yet authorized “high risk sports” including wrestling, basketball, hockey, or competitive cheering to be played. Similarly, the State has not yet authorized the “Fall II” sports season – (this is the shortened season scheduled to begin March 1 that would allow certain fall sports to be played.) We will update you on this if/as soon as we receive any new information.
6. **Malta Food Fest Supports District Programs** –The Saratoga County Chamber will host the 2nd Annual Malta Food Fest on Thursday, January 28th, at TEC-SMART in Malta from 4:30 – 7:00pm. Attendees will have the opportunity to sample delicious offerings, packaged in “grab and go” containers, from some of the best restaurants in Malta, Ballston Spa and surrounding communities. Details are on the website - click [HERE](#).
7. **FREE Meals for all Ballston Spa Students** – Our food service continues to prepare FREE meals for all students in the district - for in-school students, remote learners and for everyone when the district is on remote learning only. They offer two pickup days with multiple meals provided for remote learning students (next week pickup dates will be Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday the 27<sup>th</sup>. Monday will be 3 lunch and 3 breakfast meals. Wednesday will be 4 breakfast and 4 lunch meals.)

Finally, please continue to stay vigilant, particularly during the coming weeks through mask wearing, social distancing, avoiding large crowds, completing all portions of the Pinpoint screener each day including temperature checks, and practicing hand and mouth hygiene as these are the critical steps that will keep us all healthy.

Should you have any questions regarding this information, please let us know by sending an email to [schoolopening@bscsd.org](mailto:schoolopening@bscsd.org).

Thanks very much.

Ken

Ken Slentz  
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Ballston Spa CSD